



**MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2020  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION  
OF THE CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Commission was called to order by Chair Ding on Monday, October 19, 2020, at 8:34 a.m., in the Amedee O. “Dick” Richards, Jr., Council Chamber, located at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, California.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Commissioners: Amin Alsarraf, Ed Donnelly, Grace Liu Kung, Stephanie Cao and Scot Lam; Chair Jeremy Ding, Vice-Chair Alan Ehrlich

**Absent:** None.

**Officials**

**Present:** Councilmember/City Council Liaison Richard D. Schneider, M.D., Police Chief/Staff Liaison Joe Ortiz, Fire Chief/Staff Liaison Paul Riddle, Councilmember Mayor Pro Tem Diana Mahmud, Executive Assistant Tamara Binns, and Police Department Clerk/Recording Secretary Laura Mendez. Other staff members presented reports or responded to questions as indicated in the minutes.

**Absent:** None

**PUBLIC COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Executive Assistant Tamara Binns read emailed public comments.

(SOUTH PASADENA RESIDENT) LINDSEY ANGELATS: wrote to request that the commission agendize and formally review the South Pasadena Police Department’s handling of a well publicized event on 10/03/2020.

Helen Tran on behalf of Care First South Pasadena et.al.: submitted a letter for council to initiate an investigation of Police Chief Joe Ortiz’s actions with the American Society

for the Defense of Tradition, Family, and Property. A request was also made that the City Council place this as an agenda item for discussion at the City Council Meeting of October 7. The letter was also to serve as a personnel complaint against Chief Ortiz.

Chair Jeremy Ding also commented on a letter received by the Public Safety Commission sent by Cindy Rubin commending the Police Department and the Fire Department on the great service they provided with regard to her child.

## **ACTION/DISCUSSION**

### **1. Minutes of the Public Safety Commission Meeting of September 14, 2020**

MOTION BY VICE-CHAIR EHRLICH, AND SECOND BY, COMMISSIONER AMIN ALSARRAF, CARRIED 6-0, with to approve the Minutes of the September 14, 2020 Public Safety Commission Regular Meeting with amendments by Mayor Pro Tem Mahmud and Chair Jeremy Ding.

Commissioner Cao Abstained.

### **2. PSC Ordinance Revision-City Attorney Terri Highsmith**

Chair Ding noted that City Attorney Highsmith was on prior to the meeting inquiring if her presence was required. Chair Ding stated that City Attorney Highsmith would not be at today's meeting as they had already met with her as a subcommittee and to save the City legal fees. If any legal issues come up the Public Safety Commission would reach out to her, call her back in, or resolve at a later date.

Vice Chair Ehrlich questioned about the legal code on having a citizen oversight committee over police discipline matters. Chair Ding responded that the City Attorney informed that there were only four categories of which personnel matters can be made public. Those were officer involved shootings, sustained complaints of sexual harassment, and two other rather serious offenses. Chair Ding stated that the City Attorney's point was that as a general law city the Public Safety Commission could not get into police personnel matters. Vice Chair Ehrlich requested that the code be forwarded to everyone. Chair Ding responded with the code being SB 1421 which he will send to the Public Safety Commissioners later.

Commissioner Cao expressed concern over the implementation of section 2.40 (b) requiring within 90 days of appointment each should complete 8 hours of a ride-along training during the current pandemic. City Council Liaison Dr. Schneider replied that this requirement was suspended during the pandemic. The requirement would become a possibility after the pandemic. Commissioner Al-Sarraf clarified that the language was that the ride-along was recommended not mandatory. Vice Chair Ehrlich noted that the wording of "should" in the first part changed to "shall" in the second part. It was recommended that the language be changed "should" for both parts.

Vice Chair Ehrlich commented on section 2.40(a) requiring 2 of the commission members

to have a background in public safety as being vague. Chair Ding responded that it was purposely vague as public safety is very broad so as to include public safety other than only Police and Fire. Vice Chair Ehrlich recommended adding an equal number of members with a background in civil rights. Mayor Pro Tem Mahmud noted that a public defender would qualify as someone with a public safety background and recommended against adopting a different method of appointing individuals to this commission than is done for the other commissions, as it is inappropriate due to a large number of commissions for the City. Chair Ding discussed that there may be language regarding appointment of a non-resident business owner. Vice Chair Ehrlich responded that being a non-resident was allowable if the Chamber of Commerce or the school district were appointing someone to the commission.

Commissioner Kung agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Mahmud and stated that the requirements written as is are specific yet broad enough for the City.

Vice Chair Ehrlich commented on 2.42 who can call a special meeting and adding staff or the Mayor to those who could call a special meeting. Council Liaison Schneider, M.D. responded that if the Mayor or someone else wanted a special meeting they could work through the Council Liaison.

Vice Chair Ehrlich questioned if the Brown Act applied to the scheduling of meetings. Council Liaison Schneider, MD clarified that the Brown Act did not apply to scheduling of the meeting. Chair Ding explained that you could talk about the topic of the meeting, the necessity of the meeting, and the scheduling a meeting without violating the Brown Act. Discussing substantive comment would be a violation of the Brown Act.

Vice Chair Ehrlich asked to remove the word “maximum” in the first line of 2.42. Council Liaison Schneider M.D. agreed with removing “maximum” to read, “shall hold ten regular meetings.” Mayor Pro Tem Mahmud noted that “maximum” was used to put a limit on the scheduled staff burden. Chair Ding noted that it does not create minimum amount of meetings and that several other commissions did not schedule all ten maximum meetings. There is no mandate for a set number of meetings.

**MOTION BY CHAIR DING, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER CAO, CARRIED 5-1, to adopt and have staff and Council review for adoption into city code with one update in section 2.40(b) to change the second part from “shall” to “should. With a friendly amendment by Commissioner Cao which was unintelligible due to technical difficulties.**

Vice-Chair Ehrlich opposed.

### **3. Police Reform Subcommittee Update-Commissioners Lam & Donnelly**

Unintelligible due to technical difficulties, Commissioners Lam & Donnelly spent hours on end on Police Reform. At the end we would like this reviewed by City Council for recommendation and prioritize what sections of the frame work we want to follow up on or have additional questions.

Vice- Chair Ehrlich stated last month they all agreed on the work that Commissioner Donnelly and Lam did was thorough and the public has now had two months to comment on this, we haven't heard any comment for or against this. I will make a motion that we adopt this and send this to the City Council as a recommendations.

MOTION BY VICE-CHAIR EHRLICH, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLY, CARRIED 7-0, to have City Council review the frame work and Police Reform recommendations.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **1. City Counsel Liaison Communications**

Councilmember/City Council Liaison Richard D. Schneider, M.D. reported that on Monday October 26, there would be one more meeting session with the Police Department and the Subcommittee from Council.

### **2. Staff Liaison Communications**

Fire Chief Riddle informed that all of our personnel returned back from their deployments up North, and thought out the state they returned last week and they are all accounted for. We only had one injury, one of our new firefighters had to go to the burn ward for minor burns to the back of his head, and I'm happy to report that he is okay and back on the floor. Our front line engine also sustain burns and multiple damage to the emergency lighting, some of the holes and some of the equipment burnt on the last deployment. We have put in and have been approved to have that expense paid by the state.

We also completed our entry level firefighter paramedic lateral exam, we had over 50 applicants and we interviewed 30, and we have two in backgrounds currently and expect them to come on the floor within a month, and that will bring our staff to full staff.

I would like to inform that in Los Angeles County the infection rate continues to decline, it is currently a 3.2% meaning that 3.2% tested are positive for Covid and hospitalizations are also down. Currently there is 722 individuals hospitalized for Covid in Los Angeles County.

Police Chief Ortiz stated that the Police Department continues to sanitize frequently, our desk, the vehicles are being sanitized, when vendors come to our department their temperatures are checked.

Police Chief Ortiz was tasked to participate in a regional group with the Los Angeles County Mental Health Department to address the Homeless and Mental Health.

### **3. Commissioner Communications**

Commissioner Liu Kung announcement from the school related to safety Thursday October 13, the schools participated in the great California Shakeout. Distance Learning

will continue though Winter Break. In November, High School Students Athletes will be able to train at the school.

Vice-Chair Ehrlich stated he sent Police Chief Ortiz and Council Member Schneider, M.D. a note a couple days ago asking if the contract of the purchase of the new motorcycles had been released. There seems to be some confusion about whether or not with the departure of the City Manager, and Finance Director the contract had gotten lost in the shuffle.

Vice-Chair Ehrlich asked Police Chief Ortiz if he would be able to get a report of probable hate crimes that have occurred in the City since May, there has been a number of incidents not every week, but in the last five months and we want to get a holistic view of what they are if we can have a report on that for next month.

Vice-Chair would like to suggest to the department that we have a more active anti-racism and anti-hate campaign.

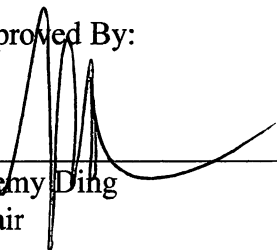
## ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ding adjourned the meeting at 9:31 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

/s/  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Laura Mendez / Joe Ramirez  
Recording Secretary

Approved By:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeremy Ding  
Chair